

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 173017

NODIS

FOR DR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT CAIRO 12283 ACTION STATE JULY 23.

QUOTE S E C R E T CAIRO 12283

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINR, EG

SUBJECT: SPECULATION ON FAHMY'S POSITION

1. EVER SINCE FAHMY'S ABORTIVE MISSION TO MOSCOW, THERE HAS BEEN TALK THAT SADAT IS DISSATISFIED WITH HIM AND MAY DROP HIM. SADAT NEVER EXPECTED MISSION TO SUCCEED, BUT ACCEPTED FAHMY'S URGINGS AND ALLOWED HIM TO GO. THE PRESIDENT'S ATTITUDE SINCE FAHMY'S RETURN HAS BEEN "I TOLD YOU SO" AND HE HAS CONTINUED HIS PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE SOVIETS. FAHMY IS CLEARLY SMARTING A BIT UNDER THIS IMPLIED REBUKE AND CLAIMS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 173017

SADAT IS EXAGGERATING THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SO-CALLED BREZHNEV "THREATS," EXCEPT IN RESPECT TO ETHIOPIA. FAHMY'S CRITICS, WHO ARE LEGION, HAVE SEIZED UPON SITUATION AND ARE PREDICTING HIS EARLY DEMISE.

2. ONE VERSION WAS GIVEN TO ME LAST EVENING BY IRANIAN AMBASSADOR BAHRAMY, WHO TENDS TO POUNCE ON

RUMORS AND PEDDLE THEM. ACCORDING TO HIS VERSION, SADAT WANTS TO GET RID OF FAHMY AND REPLACE HIM WITH MINSTATE MOHAMED RIAD. HOWEVER, MOHAMED RIAD DOES NOT HAVE THE FORCEFUL PERSONALITY FOR THE JOB. HENCE, BAHRAMY'S VERSION HAS IT, SADAT INTENDS TO APPOINT ASHRAF GHORBAL AS FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRESENT MFA UNDERSEC SALAH AL-HASSAN (A SENIOR EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR) AS NO. 2 IN MFA. STORY GOES ON TO SUGGEST THAT SAYED MAREI, PRESENT SPEAKER OF PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, WOULD THEN BE APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON. IRANIAN AMBASSADOR IS PERSUADED STORY IS TRUE AND ASSERTS GHORBAL, IF NAMED, WOULD PURSUE A STRONGER PRO-AMERICAN POLICY THAN FAHMY HAS. FRENCH EMBASSY IS PEDDLING SIMILAR VERSION (WHICH MAY BE WHERE BAHRAMY GOT HIS STORY) ADDING REASON FAHMY DID NOT GO TO OAU FONMIN MEETING WAS TO REMAIN CLOSE TO SADAT IN ORDER TO PROTECT HIS OWN POSITION.

3. I REPORT THE ABOVE BECAUSE THE STORY IS CIRCULATING AND MAY COME TO YOUR ATTENTION. I HAVE SENSED NOTHING THAT WOULD SUPPORT IT. WHILE SADAT AND FAHMY ARE INDEED IN SOME DISAGREEMENT ON THE SOVIETS, AND FAHMY IS NOT LOATHE TO CRITICIZE SADAT'S VIEWS, EVERYTHING I SEE INDICATES THEY ARE STILL WORKING CLOSELY TOGETHER. FAHMY, OF COURSE, KNOWS DESIRABILITY STAYING CLOSE TO SADAT IN ORDER TO BE ABLE INFLUENCE THE PRESIDENT ON
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 173017

ISSUES. HOWEVER, REASON HE DID NOT GO TO OAU FONMIN MEETING IS MUCH MORE SIMPLE--HE THINKS THEY ARE USELESS AND ALWAYS TRIES TO AVOID ATTENDING. MY GUESS IS THAT FOR MANY OF FAHMY'S CRITICS, THE WISH IS FATHER TO THE THOUGHT.

4. HOWEVER, FAHMY, WHOSE ANTENNAE ARE OUT, HAS DOUBTLESS HEARD THE STORY AND HIS EFFORTS EXCLUDE GHORBAL FROM ANY POLICY COUNCILS OR INFO MAY BE EXPECTED INTEKKNIFY. EILTS UNQUOTE VANCE

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